GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANAGA REJUVENATION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4801
ANSWERED ON:15.12.2016
Dredging of Brahmaputra River
Ajmal Shri Sirajuddin

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANAGA REJUVENATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to dredge the channels of Brahmaputra river in Assam including those located in lower portion; and
(b) if so, the details thereof along with the funds allocated for the purpose, channel-wise?

Answer

THEMINISTER OF STATE FOR WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT & GANGA REJUVENATION
(Dr. SANJEEV KUMAR BALYAN)
(a) & (b) Flood management including silt management being a State Subject, the responsibility of planning, funding, executing and operating the flood management scheme primarily rests with the State Govt. concerned. The assistance rendered by Central Government is technical, catalytic and advisory in nature.
MoWR vide its letter dated 8.10.2001 had set up a multi-disciplinary Committee (Mittal Committee) to identify cause and extent of siltation in rivers, suggest measures to minimize siltation, examine as to whether desilting is a technically feasible means to minimize magnitude of floods in rivers, suggest appropriate technology/ methods of desilting of rivers, propose a realistic operational programme in a time-bound manner and other related aspects. The committee inter-alia concluded that desilting in general is not feasible technically, due to several reasons like non-sustainability, non-availability of vast land required for the disposal of dredged material, etc. This cannot be viewed in isolation of other approaches to manage floods. Desilting of rivers in vulnerable reaches may be suggested based on model studies if it is found techno-economically viable. For navigation purpose, the river reaches in the waterways path may be dredged to have minimum depth of water.
Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) undertakes dredging as per requirement to maintain a fairway of 45 m width with least assured depth (LAD) of 2.5 m /2.0 m/1.5 m at different stretches between Dhubri and Sadiya on river Brahmaputra (National Waterway-2). The fund allocation for fairway development of National Waterway-2 for the Financial Year 2016-17 is Rs. 11.80 crore.
Water Resources Department, Government of Assam has explored the possibilities of dredging of river Brahmaputra to solve the problem of siltation and to control the active erosion. In order to address this issue, the Water Resources Department organized a workshop and held a Technical Session "Fluvial Morphology of river Brahmaputra, sediment management with possibility of dredging by adopting modern technology" As per decision of the workshop an interdisciplinary expert group has been constituted to prepare an action plan. The Dredging Corporation of India (DCI) has already taken up preliminary surveys at selected reaches, for the purpose.
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